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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT
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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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SUBJECT: "War Changed the Food Picture"--Information from economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture

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Twenty-five years from now...you may be telling your grandchildren about the war...and how it was here on the home front. You'll recall shortages--of course--such as sugar and butter and meat and canned goods. You'll explain about ration points. And very likely you'll tell how tired you used to get--sometimes--standing in line to buy groceries.

Chances are you'll wind up your story with "But we never went hungry. Rationing made it possible for each of us to get our share. And when we couldn't get some of the cuts of meats we wanted...there were milk and eggs and lots of fresh fruits and vegetables. No we never went hungry for lack of good foods during the war."

And if one of the bright little fellows in the family is a schoolboy, he'll say, "Why Grandma...our history book says the people of the United States had more to eat during the war than they did before."

And your grandson will be right. Even while we provided huge quantities of food to our armed forces and to our allies...we (as a people) ate considerably more food during the war years than we did in the years before the war.

This was made possible by a tremendous expansion of food production on the farms of the United States. The expansion started in 1941...and by 1944...the farms of this country produced more than a third more food---38 percent---than they had grown in the pre-war years--1935 to '39.

Before the war...we ate nearly all the food we grew in this country...right here at home. We exported only 3 percent of our food supply to other countries.

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Increased food production made it possible for us to eat better at home...and at the same time to export more food. In 1942...our exports of food rose to 6 percent...principally under lend-lease. That same year...we allocated nearly 7 percent of our food supply to the armed forces.

Toward the end of the war....we were exporting about 7 percent of our total supply---that is from stockpiles of food on hand added to current production. The military was taking 13 percent. And civilians got the remainder...which was nearly four-fifths of the total supply. But with increased production...it was possible for the people of this country to consume about 9 percent more food per capita in 1945 than they used in the pre-war years of 1935 to 1939.

We grew more food. We---as a people---ate more food during the war years. And our demands for food out-reached the supply. Even after the end of the war... supplies of some foods continue to fall short of total demands (as you're likely to discover when you shop for groceries).

But economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture predict the amount of food available to civilians in 1946 will be considerably greater than it was this past year. And the prospect is...we'll be eating more this year than we did in the record war year...1944.

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